United Nations E/CN.3/2001/L.6/Add.1

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
6 March 2001

Original: English

Statistical Commission
Thirty-second session
6-9 March 2001
Agenda item 8
Report of the Commission on its thirty-second session

Draft report

Addendum

Rapporteur: V. Dinculescu (Romania)

Human settlements statistics

1. The Commission considered item 3(a) of its agenda at its first meeting, on 6 March 2001. It had before it a report prepared by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements on human settlements statistics (Habitat) (E/CN.3/2001/2).

Action taken by the Commission

2. The Commission:

(a) Endorsed the human settlements statistics programme as presented in the Habitat report, including the quinquennial cycle for data collection and dissemination; took note of the necessity and stressed the importance of reviewing and enhancing the quality of human settlements statistics, bearing in mind the cross-country comparison difficulties in this field, and of more fully utilizing census data; and pointed out the very considerable obstacles to international agreement on standards in housing, housing conditions and human settlements development;

(b) Encouraged Habitat to convene, in consultation with the United Nations Statistics Division, an expert group meeting to evaluate existing methodologies and data-collection and dissemination instruments, as well as concepts and sources of city statistics;

(c) Recognized the work on development of more dynamic city indicators on such topics as environment, urban poverty and informal sector economic activities, which would also provide for targeting differentials within a city.

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Gender statistics: progress on time-use statistics

3. The Commission considered item 3(c) of its agenda at its first meeting, on 6 March 2001. It had before it the report of the Secretary-General on the progress of a project on gender issues in the measurement of paid and unpaid work (E/CN.3/2001/4).

Action taken by the Commission

4. The Commission:

(a) Welcomed the initiatives of the United Nations Statistics Division in the measurement of paid and unpaid work, in particular the development of the guide to producing statistics on time use for measuring paid and unpaid work and the web site on time-use surveys;

(b) Noted the value of time-use statistics, not only for issues related to gender but also more broadly for quality-of-life concerns, social accounting, care of the elderly, estimates of the workforce and total work accounts;

(c) Endorsed the outline for the guide, and raised a number of specific issues related to the design and methods of time-use surveys that the guide should address, including the effect of resources and other constraints; considerations related to sampling; non-response rates; respondent burden; the use of information technology; and ensuring the consistency of the classification with the System of National Accounts. Considerations related to the dissemination and use of time-use statistics, including in the valuation of unpaid work, were also raised. Many countries expressed interest in sharing the results of their work and continuing to collaborate with the Division in the development of the guide.

Siena Group for Social Statistics

5. The Commission considered item 3(d) of its agenda at its second meeting, on 6 March 2001. It had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Siena Group for Social Statistics (E/CN.3/2001/5);

(b) Background document entitled "Report of the Expert Group on Household Income Statistics";

(c) Background document entitled "The Canberra Group: final report and recommendations".

Action taken by the Commission

6. The Commission:

(a) Stressed the importance of the Group for reviewing and enhancing the programme of social statistics and indicators, bearing in mind the cross-cutting nature of this work;

(b) Noted that the Group potentially provides future leadership for addressing public policy;

(c) Requested that the Group provide a clear and focused document, stating the priority areas, covering both short- and long-term goals, necessary to ensure that its objectives are both clear and attainable;

(d) Welcomed the proposal by the current secretariat of the Group to prepare a written statement of the short-term and long-term goals of the Group for circulation and finalization in a few months' time.

7. The Commission welcomed the final report of the Canberra Group on Household Income Statistics, and thanked that Group for its significant contribution in this field of statistics.

Statistics of international trade in services

8. The Commission considered item 4(c) of its agenda at its second meeting, on 6 March 2001. It had before it the following documents:

(a) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Task Force on Statistics of International Trade in Services (E/CN.3/2001/10);

(b) Draft manual on statistics of international trade in services (PROV/ST/ESA/STAT/SER.M/86);

(c) Background document entitled "Note prepared by the World Tourism Organization for the United Nations Statistics Division on the draft manual on International Trade in Services";

(d) Background document entitled "The response of the Task Force on Statistics of International Trade in Services to the note prepared by the World Tourism Organization for the United Nations Statistics Division on the draft manual on international trade in services".

Action taken by the Commission

9. The Commission:

(a) Approved the manual prepared by the Task Force on International Trade in Services as an international manual, and commended the Task Force for its work;

(b) Noted the proposal brought forward by the World Tourism Organization, and responded that the detail requested should be elaborated in satellite accounts but not in this manual;

(c) Recommended that the Task Force continue its work, focusing on the proposed users' manual on data collection as the next step;

(d) Was conscious of the fact that implementation of the manual will be a long-term process;

(e) Agreed to the proposal for international data collection on trade in services, as brought forward by the Task Force, noting that full coordination between agencies is required and that implementation of the data collection will also require a phased process.

Review of existing statistical programmes in relation to United Nations special years and observances

10. The Commission considered item 6(b) of its agenda at its first meeting, on 6 March 2001. It had before it the report of the Secretary-General on existing statistical programmes in relation to selected United Nations special years and observances (E/CN.3/2001/15).

Action taken by the Commission

11. The Commission took note of the report.